

2013 MISSOURI STATE PARKS Annual Report



Water is a feature of many of Missouri's state parks and historic sites. Use a paddle to explore a different side of your favorite facility.

Jeremiah W. (Jay) Nixon

Governor of Missouri

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A letter from Gov. Jay Nixon:

Missouri's proud history and outdoor heritage is on display in Missouri State Parks.

As Governor, I am proud to say that I have visited every state park and historic site in the Show-Me State. Whether it's an opportunity to get outdoors and enjoy nature or to experience the history of our great state, Missouri State Parks offer something for everyone.

Last year, I was pleased to announce that Missouri was named the "Best Trails State" by American Trails. The award highlights the great trails throughout our state, including the nearly 1,000 miles of managed trails in Missouri State Parks. To celebrate Missouri's distinction as the "Best Trails State," the First Lady and I launched the 100 Missouri Miles Challenge, which invited Missourians to join us in completing 100 miles of outdoor physical activity by the end of the year. During 2013, more than 1 million miles were completed, and many were logged on trails in state parks and historic sites.

As we worked to maintain and expand our incredible system of state parks and historic sites, I was also pleased to celebrate our past, present and future at several events this year. This included the ribbon cutting to celebrate the rebuild of the iconic Camp Pin Oak Lodge at Lake of the Ozarks State Park and the unveiling of a Civilian Conservation Corps statue at Roaring River State Park.

Looking ahead in 2014, we will continue to develop and strengthen our state park system and encourage more Missourians to explore the outdoors. I hope you will join me in enjoying the wonderful resources available in Missouri State Parks.

Jeremiah W. (Jay) Nixon
Governor of Missouri

A letter from the Director:

Missouri State Parks has consistently been ranked as one of the top four state park systems in the nation. The 87 state parks and historic sites, plus the Roger Pryor Pioneer Backcountry, make more than 200,000 acres available to the public. The system includes homes of famous Missourians, Civil War battlefields, and reminders of yesterday such as gristmills and covered bridges. We also protect and preserve the state's most outstanding landscapes – deep forests, glades, prairies, blue streams and clear lakes – for everyone's enjoyment.

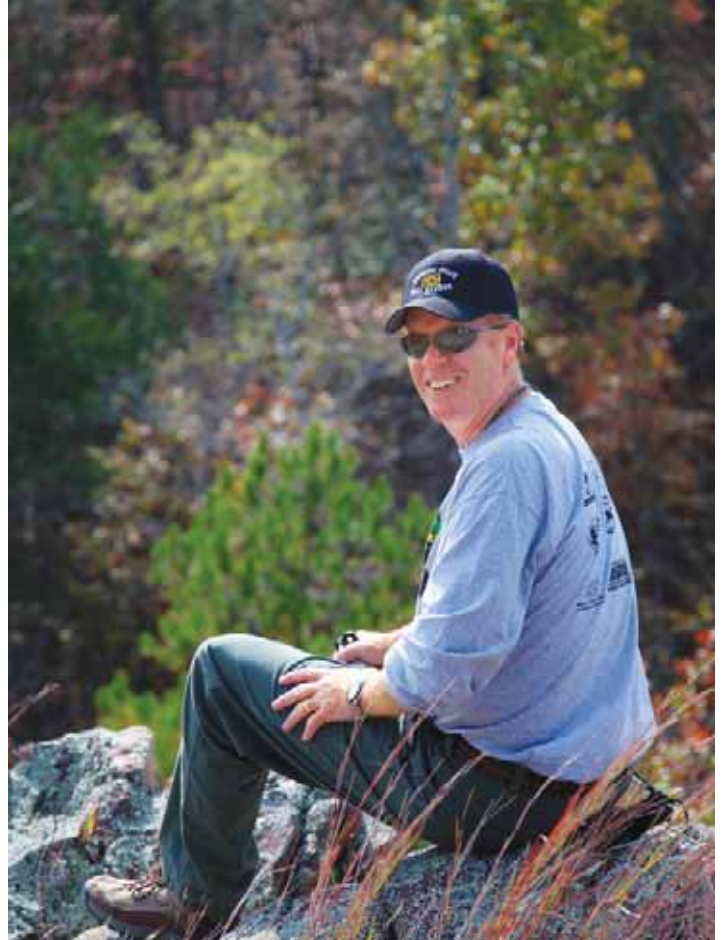
In 2013, nearly 17.5 million people visited Missouri State Parks to hike, camp, fish, discover the past and simply explore nature. The system is managed by around 500 dedicated full-time employees and approximately 1,000 seasonal employees. Our team does a great job making sure our guests enjoy their experience in Missouri State Parks. Thanks to our team's efforts, our state parks consistently earn a 97 percent approval rating from our guests.


We were glad to celebrate several accomplishments in 2013. From being recognized for our award-winning trails to launching an improved camping and lodging reservation system, we are proud of the work that has been accomplished. This year also marked the fourth successful year for State Parks Youth Corps, a jobs program that provides Missouri youth with work experience while improving our state parks and historic sites.

Missourians are proud of their state parks. In 1984, Missourians voted to support state parks and soil conservation with a 1/10th of a cent sales tax. When the sales tax was last renewed at the polls in 2006, more than 71 percent of Missourians voted to renew it. We appreciate and highly value your support. You have my word that we will always respect the trust you have placed in us to operate your state park system. We won't let you down.

Remember, "You Are Always Welcome in Missouri State Parks!"

Bill Bryan,
Director, Missouri State Parks



A full-page photograph of two hikers in a forest. The hiker in the foreground is a woman with long brown hair, wearing a teal long-sleeved shirt, black shorts, and a white baseball cap. She is holding a white map or paper and looking at it. She has a large black backpack with yellow accents. The hiker behind her is wearing a blue shirt and a black backpack. They are standing on a rocky trail. A large, thin tree trunk is in the center of the frame, with a small red circular marker on its bark. The background is a dense forest of green trees.

Grab your gear and go! Fifteen backpacking trails and 29 backpacking camps or shelters are offered in Missouri State Parks.



Grand Gulf State Park
2013 Rural Missouri Photo Contest Winner



MISSOURI NAMED the Best Trails State

Missouri was named the “Best Trails State” by American Trails, a national, nonprofit organization working on behalf of the nation’s hiking, biking and riding trails. The national award is presented every two years to the state that has made tremendous contributions to promote and improve their trail system.

Missouri State Parks offers almost 1,000 miles of managed trails and the state claims more than 500 miles of National Recreation Trails designated by the U.S. Department of Interior. The state lives up to its reputation as “Gateway to the West” with significant trails including the Lewis and Clark, Trail of Tears, and Santa Fe National Historic Trails passing through the state and the Pony Express, California and Oregon National Historic Trails beginning on the western border. Missouri is also the home of Katy Trail State Park, the longest developed rail-trail in the nation.

The award also recognized Missouri State Parks for a project that began in 2008 to inventory and manage trails, which is being used in a statewide effort to consolidate and coordinate trail data. Missouri State Parks recently released *Trails of Missouri State Parks*, a book that provides detailed information on more than 230 Missouri State Parks trails. The database and resulting trail book were also recognized by the Society of Outdoor Recreation Professionals (SORP) with the 2013 Project Excellence Award. SORP presents the award annually to exemplary projects in the field of outdoor recreation research, planning, management and policy.

From a short walk on a paved trail to a hike through the wilderness, Missouri State Parks’ trail system has a lot to offer. You can also check out the new Missouri Trails Alliance site at visitmissouritrails.com for more resources on managed trails throughout the state.

100 Missouri Miles Challenge Encourages Outdoor Activity

In 2013, to celebrate Missouri’s distinction as the “Best Trails State” and to encourage Missourians to enjoy the outdoors, Gov. Jay Nixon and First Lady Georganne Nixon invited Missourians to join them in completing 100 Missouri Miles of outdoor physical activity by the end of the year.

The program launched in June and more than 12,500 participants logged more than 1 million miles by running, walking, bicycling, paddling or rolling. Plans for a 2014 program are under way to once again encourage Missourians to enjoy healthy outdoor activity. Visit 100missourimiles.com for more information.



Camp Pin Oak Dining Lodge RISES FROM THE ASHES



On Oct. 16, Gov. Jay Nixon cut the ceremonial ribbon reopening the Camp Pin Oak Lodge at Lake of the Ozarks State Park. He was joined by students and officials from State Fair Community College, and leadership from Missouri State Parks and the Missouri Department of Natural Resources. The original structure, built in the 1930s by the Civilian Conservation Corps, caught fire during a thunderstorm in 2010.

In 2011, Gov. Nixon announced a memorandum of agreement between Missouri State Parks and State Fair Community College in Sedalia for a training and education project with students rebuilding the lodge. The Missouri Department of Economic Development authorized a community development block grant of \$1.5 million to Pettis County to fund the project.

The finished Camp Pin Oak Lodge was built with careful attention to historical accuracy in the same location and approximate size of the original. Features were designed to match the originals. The rebuilt lodge includes a modern kitchen, laundry and accessible restrooms. The hall accommodates 135 people, is fully accessible and is centrally heated and cooled.



STATUE UNVEILED at Roaring River State Park



In May, veterans of the Civilian Conservation Corps, members of the State Parks Youth Corps, and state officials joined together to dedicate a monument to the CCC at Roaring River State Park. The statue represents the likeness of a typical CCC worker and honors the work the crews completed at the park and throughout the state.

The unveiling of the statue was part of Missouri's celebration of the 80th anniversary of the CCC. During the years of the CCC in the 1930s, crews worked in 15 Missouri state parks, nearly all in the Ozarks. A total of 342 structures built in the state park system are now listed in the National Register of Historic Places.

New Yurts Unveiled

Missouri State Parks offers 40 campgrounds, and many parks have traditional cabins or camper cabins for visitors to enjoy. An additional experience is now available for park visitors to enjoy alternative lodging that is economical and comfortable.

Yurts are a cross between a tent and a traditional cabin or RV camper. A durable fabric is stretched over a wood frame that includes a lattice wall and rafters. The structure has a wood floor and is fastened to a railed deck that sits on concrete footings.

The yurt has a front door that locks, and three mesh-screened windows that can seal shut with clear vinyl framed in Velcro. The yurt has electricity, air conditioning and heat, a small refrigerator and a microwave. The furnishings include a log futon, futon bunk bed and coffee table. A concrete pad out front has parking space, a picnic table, pedestal grill, fire ring and lantern post. The yurt does not have running water.

In 2013, construction was completed on an additional yurt at Lake of the Ozarks State Park and two new yurts at Pomme de Terre State Park.

Reservations for camping, camper cabins or yurts at state parks can be made online at mostateparks.com, or by calling 877-ICampMo (877-422-6766).



Sandy Creek Covered Bridge is PICTURE PERFECT

Sandy Creek Covered Bridge State Historic Site in Jefferson County was restored to its former glory. The completed restoration included cleaning the support beams, replacing the white pine siding, and painting it the original barn red.

The work was funded by a federal grant through the National Historic Covered Bridge Preservation Program, which assists states in efforts to preserve, rehabilitate or restore the nation's historic covered bridges. Precautions were also taken to keep the bridge protected. A coating was applied to the beams and siding that seals the wood and allows for easy removal of any future damage.

Efforts are under way to utilize the same grant funding for restoration efforts at Union Covered Bridge State Historic Site in Monroe County.



Protecting Our Forests

The emerald ash borer (EAB), an exotic beetle that has killed millions of ash trees in the northern, central and eastern United States, has been found in Missouri. The spread of EAB and other destructive forest pests has been directly attributed to the movement of wood products, especially firewood. Missouri is included in the federal EAB quarantine that restricts the movement of ash wood products and hardwood firewood.

To make sure visitors have the information to not unintentionally put trees at risk, Missouri State Parks encourages campers to buy firewood locally at or near their camping destination. Guests are also encouraged to burn all of their firewood on-site.





State Parks Youth Corps Benefits Youth and State Parks

The State Parks Youth Corps (SPYC) hired more than 300 young Missourians to work in state parks and historic sites for the fourth successful year. The SPYC participants, ranging in age from 17-23, completed more than 70,000 hours of work in state parks and historic sites. Tasks included trail maintenance, landscaping, painting historic structures and leading interpretive programs.

In 2013, Missouri State Parks Youth Corps was accepted as a part of the 21st Century Conservation Service Corps. The national program works to connect youth and veterans with job and training opportunities protecting, restoring and enhancing America's natural and cultural resources.

The State Parks Youth Corps is a cooperative program between Missouri State Parks and the Missouri Department of Economic Development.



Learn2 Provides Outdoor Education

Enjoying the outdoors is the goal of the Learn2 programs offered by Missouri State Parks at sites throughout the state. For the second year, staff at participating parks offered training on camping, paddling and other activities, with the programs tailored for individuals and families with little or no experience in the outdoors.

Tents, stoves, kitchen kits, sleeping pads and other camping equipment are provided for the weekend Learn2 Camp programs through a partnership with The North Face under its "Explore Your Parks" program. During 2013, there were Learn2 Camp programs at five state parks with 77 people participating. Sessions were taught at Robertsville, Trail of Tears, Montauk and Weston Bend state parks and Arrow Rock State Historic Site.

Learn2 Paddle programs allow visitors to learn more about kayaking in Missouri State Parks. In 2013, 272 people signed up for classes in Lake Wappapello, Crowder, Cuivre River, Wakonda, Stockton and Finger Lakes state parks.



Updated Reservation System Provides New Features

Missouri State Parks began transitioning to a new reservation system. The updated system provides a consistent revenue management system throughout the entirety of Missouri State Parks' 87 state parks and historic sites. The new website, which was launched in December, also offers more features for customers.

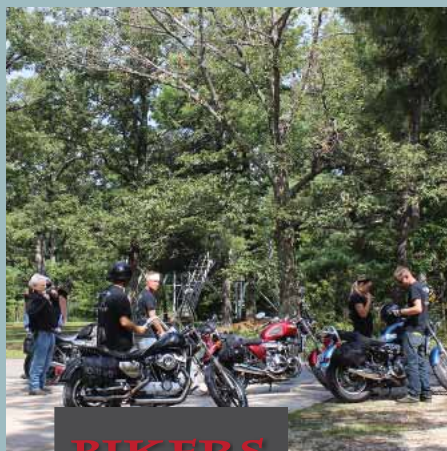
Guests looking to make camping and lodging reservations online can now utilize interactive maps that show availability and provide additional details. Visitors can also now make reservations online and through the call center for site tours offered at historic sites. Another highlight of RS2 is the contractor's use of a Missouri-based call center located in Carthage.

To make a camping reservation at Missouri State Parks, call 877-ICampMo (877-422-6766) or visit mostateparks.com.



KATY TRAIL RIDE

The 13th annual Katy Trail Ride was held June 17-21, allowing nearly 300 bicyclists to experience Katy Trail State Park from Clinton to St. Charles. Missouri State Parks and Missouri State Parks Foundation sponsored the scenic five-day ride on the nation's longest developed rail trail. The 2013 ride covered approximately 253 miles of Katy Trail and featured great food and many fun activities. Many riders also signed of the Governor's 100 Missouri Mile Challenge, completing the 100 miles of outdoor physical activity by the second day of the event.



BIKERS AT BAKER

Missouri State Parks once again invited motorcycle riders to experience the rolling St. Francois Mountains while rolling down the highway during the second annual Bikers at Baker Motorcycle Tour and Poker Run on Sept. 6-8. Sponsored by Missouri State Parks and the Conservation Federation of Missouri, the event gave riders the opportunity to explore some of the most scenic and dramatic state parks, including Taum Sauk Mountain State Park, Johnson's Shut-Ins State Park and Elephant Rocks State Park.



TROUTAPALOOZA

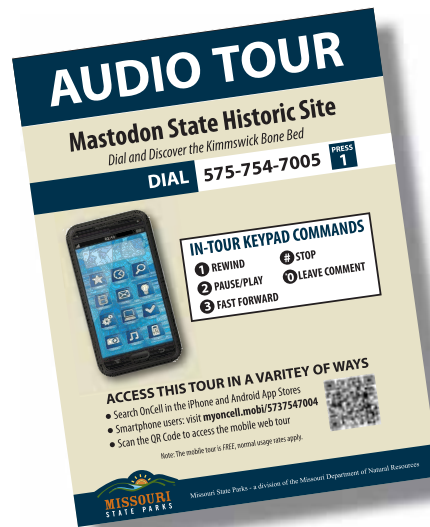
March 1 marks the start of the catch-and-keep trout season at Missouri State Parks' three trout parks, Bennett Spring State Park near Lebanon, Montauk State Park near Salem and Roaring River State Park near Cassville. Missouri State Parks proclaimed 2013 to be "The Year of the Trout" and celebrated the season with "Troutapalooza." The event featured a series of programs designed to engage experienced anglers and introduce new participants to the activity. A series of activities promoted fishing for visitors of all ages and skill levels including a passport program, monthly clinics, and tournaments.



Top-Notch Interpreters

Missouri State Parks interpreters work to bring state parks and historic sites to life for visitors. At this year's meeting of the Association of Missouri Interpreters, the organization recognized excellence in the field. All awards were taken by Missouri State Parks interpreters and naturalists. This included awards for Outstanding Interpretive Volunteer, Outstanding Interpretive Effort, Outstanding Interpretive Media, Outstanding Professional Interpreter, Outstanding Interpretive Conference Concurrent Session, and AMI Interpreter's Quiz.

Visitors can experience the award-winning work of Missouri State Parks interpreters by attending a program at a park or site near them.



Mobile Tour System Available

Missouri State Parks is piloting the use of hand-held mobile devices to provide audio tours at Weston Bend State Park near Weston, and Mastodon State Historic Site in Imperial. These mobile tours, provided through the OnCell Mobile Tour System, offer visitors another avenue to learn about the cultural and natural aspects of each site through historical images, written text and audio commentary.

Once a visitor is at a participating park or site, they can access the mobile tour in a variety of ways. The full tour can be accessed through the Internet, the OnCell app, or by scanning the QR Code on each tour stop sign. The tour can also be accessed by calling the phone number listed on the tour signs. Once the number is called, the audio portion of the tour will play.



National Initiatives Provide New Opportunities

Continuing efforts to engage visitors and attract new guests, Missouri State Parks increased efforts to participate in national initiatives. These programs provide the opportunity to show support for our national partners while utilizing resources offered through these programs.

• First Day Hikes

On Jan. 1, we got the year started off right with a guided hike.

• Kids to Parks

On May 18, we encouraged kids to start the summer off with family-focused activities.

• National Trails Day


On June 1, we celebrated our award-winning trail system with guided hikes and activities.

• The Great American Backyard Campout

On June 22, we brought together families, friends and youth groups with nature for a fun and memorable night sleeping under the stars.

• National Public Lands Day

On Sept. 28, we joined with our volunteers to celebrate and improve our public lands.

A family is hiking on a wooden boardwalk that winds through tall, green grass. In the foreground, a young girl in a pink tank top and dark shorts is walking towards the camera. Behind her, a woman in a green tank top and white shorts is walking, pointing towards the right. Further back, a man in a blue cap and dark shorts is walking, followed by a woman in a purple tank top and white shorts, and two young boys. The boardwalk is made of wooden planks and is surrounded by dense, tall grass and some trees in the background.

Trails are a great way for the entire family to enjoy an outdoor experience. Check out Trails of Missouri State Parks for detailed information on more than 230 trails in Missouri State Parks.

New Property Acquired



The state acquired 330 acres of property in Shannon County. The property, historically referred to as Camp Zoe, is located adjacent to Current River State Park and downstream from Montauk State Park. It also abuts the 60,000-acre Roger Pryor Pioneer Backcountry, which is managed by Missouri State Parks.

Originally opening in 1929 as a youth camp, Camp Zoe provided opportunities for thousands of young people to connect with the outdoors. Missouri State Parks became interested in the property for its beauty and the potential to give visitors even more opportunities to enjoy the outdoors in this beautiful part of the state.

Among the beautiful natural resources on the property is Sinkin Creek near its confluence with the Current River. The property features sheer bluffs that trace the water's edge and provide a stunning landscape. The property is also rich in bird life and vegetation, including forest and glade ecosystems.

Plans for development of the property and future use are in the preliminary stages.



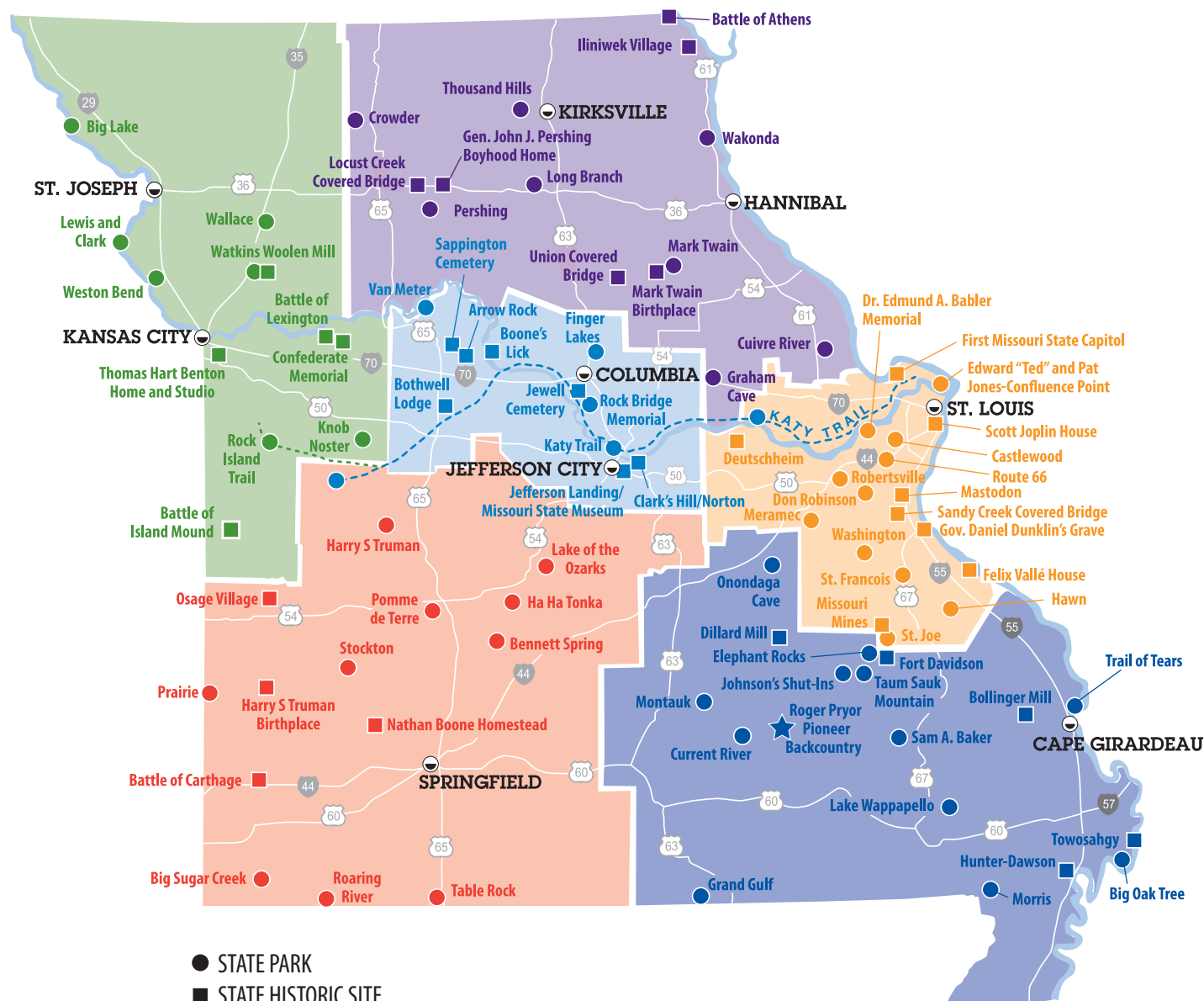
J. HUSTON TAVERN Continues Serving Customers



The J. Huston Tavern at Arrow Rock State Historic Site was built in 1834 and is the oldest continuously serving restaurant west of the Mississippi River. The tavern has marked 180 years of continuous service to the public. It is the centerpiece of Arrow Rock State Historic Site and has an important economic impact on the local community.

The tavern potentially faced closure due to a lack of interested concessionaires, but Missouri State Parks took over management of the restaurant. Since the state took over management of the tavern, the business has seen a \$3,600 increase compared to the previous year. New menu and retail items as well as creative special events have contributed to the success of the tavern.

Missouri State Parks and Historic Sites



LEGEND FOR MISSOURI REGIONAL MAP

■ KANSAS CITY
 ■ LAKES
 ■ SOUTHEAST
 ■ CENTRAL
 ■ ST. LOUIS
 ■ NORTHEAST



2013 BY THE NUMBERS

- Missouri State Parks interpreters interacted with nearly 1.8 million guests, a 5.9 percent increase over the previous year. Interpreters presented more than 54,000 programs, a 10.6 percent increase over the previous year.

- Mostateparks.com had more than 1.4 million visitors, a 2 percent increase over the previous year. Followers on the Missouri State Parks Facebook page increased to more than 22,000.

- Staff received and processed 62,881 camping reservations, a 9 percent increase over 2012.

- Park-run lodging at Johnson's Shut-Ins State Park, Lake of the Ozarks State Park, Mark Twain State Park and Pomme de Terre State Park saw a 12 percent increase over the previous year.

- Visitors to Missouri State Parks in 2013 totaled 17.5 million. Fall is quickly becoming one of the most popular seasons for visitors to enjoy parks and sites. From September through November, Missouri State Parks saw a 7 percent increase in attendance over the previous year.

- Revenue generated by Missouri State Parks totaled \$9.7 million.

- Missouri's state parks and historic sites earned a 97 percent approval rating from guests.

- Volunteers in Missouri State Parks contributed more than 238,000 hours in parks and historic sites.



April 6, 2013, Arrow Rock State Historic Site

As a historian, a born native of this county, past county recorder - I love Arrow Rock. This center is a great asset to our county and promoted the center before it was built here.

July 2, 2013, Arrow Rock State Historic Site

We stayed over the 4th of July holiday and were absolutely charmed by the Americana atmosphere, friendliness of the park and village's people, upkeep of the entire site and helpfulness of the staff. We learned a lot about the area and the history of Arrow Rock's role in the establishment of the way westward for thousands of people expanding our country. Thank you!

Aug. 2, 2013, Sam A. Baker State Park

This is our favorite park. We have been here an average of once (or twice) a year for over 40 years. My husband came as a child over 60 years ago. We are already planning a trip or two for next year.

Oct. 4, 2013,**Battle of Lexington State Historic Site**

I was very impressed with everything overall. Since I am originally from the east, the Civil War in the border states is very much neglected. I found everything to be very informative and the staff extremely friendly. This certainly has opened me up to a new side of the Civil War and I will most certainly return to this site!

July 11, 2013, Bennett Spring State Park

We have been coming to Bennett Spring State Park for over 40 years. Now our children and grandchildren meet us there every July. It's a great family location for a family reunion, fishing, and fun activities. It is a beautiful state park.

May 17, 2013, Crowder State Park

We have enjoyed this park for many years as residents of Trenton. The past 15 years we have traveled full-time from coast-to-coast and Alaska to Key West and most roads in Canada. We choose state, national, provincial, county, forest, and Corps of Engineers parks to experience the local land and people. Through the years, Crowder Park has always been home to us. It continues to charm us.

July 9, 2013, Grand Gulf State Park

We all, my husband, sister, friends and I are very thankful for parks and camp areas that are preserved and kept clean for public enjoyment. As seniors, we take great pleasure in seeing the younger generation interested in and enjoying state recreational areas. As a former educator, I truly appreciate the educational brochures and the large color displays of historical time frames. Thank you very much for preserving our heritage.

June 17, 2013,**Scott Joplin House State Historic Site**

For so many years, I feared that Scott Joplin would be forgotten. What a pleasure it was to see his home preserved! I own a player piano and have many Joplin rags on piano rolls. My greatest thrill of our visit was being able to play 3 Joplin rags on the piano in his home! Our guide was polite, friendly, and very knowledgeable. We loved every minute of our tour. Thank you!

June 8, 2013, Katy Trail State Park

Despite the unusual storms and flooding we found the trails had been cleared of fallen trees and branches. There were signs posted when the trail was impassable because of water and mud. Friendly hikers warned us of unfavorable conditions ahead of us and informed us of parts of the trail that were open. They told us of the pretty parts with good river views and smooth trail. Nature, excellent views, and friendly folk. A long-time dream came true.

Oct. 6, 2013, Onondaga Cave State Park

Onondaga State Park is quickly becoming our favorite camping spot. You have access to rivers, hiking, and quick access from home. Plan to spend many more vacations down here. Keep up the good work. The WiFi is an added bonus to the park systems. Thanks.

June 14, 2013, Roaring River State Park

This was my 1st camping trip. My parents had taken me there to show me where they had camped when my older siblings were young. This trip was to celebrate my parents 50th anniversary. We all had a great time and I can see why my folks liked coming here all those years ago. They pointed out a number of changes, but overall it brought back many memories for them. We are hoping to get the whole family together again.

**July 3, 2013, Robertsville State Park**

We've been coming here for the past 3-4 years and it is our favorite place to camp. Campsites are the best facilities and staff the greatest. Keep up the great job! Thank you!

July 7, 2013,**Mark Twain Birthplace State Historic Site**

Visiting Twain's birthplace was like a personal pilgrimage - very moving, informative, and exhibits designed and presented with respect and affection for this amazing man. The staff person that day answered all my questions and helped me select gifts for a Twain fan at home.

July 31, 2013, Wallace State Park

We have been traveling for 3 months and crossed many states after leaving our home base in San Diego. Wallace State Park has been one of the cleanest state parks we've been to. Great job! Enjoyed our stay even through the rain.

2014 IS GOING TO BE AWESOME.

Missouri State Parks made great progress in 2013, and we are proud of the work we have completed to give our visitors a great experience. We were recognized for our award-winning trails, held a variety of successful events, and remained committed to protecting our state's natural and cultural wonders. In 2014, we plan to continue the good work and expand our efforts to make sure our visitors know they are "always welcome in Missouri State Parks."

As we continue to recognize Missouri's outstanding trail system, we invite you to celebrate 2014 as Year of the Trail. Events throughout the year will focus on all of the great activities that are possible on the nearly 1,000 miles of trails available in Missouri State Parks.

We're excited about the coming year and hope you will join us by taking the opportunity to explore history and get outdoors in 2014. Check out mostateparks.com throughout the year to hear about the adventures you can discover in Missouri State Parks.

